

PART 306-3--Administrative Requirements

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306-3.1 Who processes foreign travel packages for NOAA?

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) processes all NMFS foreign travel packages and the NOAA Travel Office (NTO) processes all other foreign travel packages.

306-3.2 What is a “complete” foreign travel package?

A complete foreign travel package consists of:

- 1) a completed “Foreign Travel Checklist”; *See NTR, Chapter 306-7.1*
- 2) two photocopies of the approved travel authorization with a travel authorization number assigned by the Line/Staff Office. The employee’s title must be shown on the travel authorization, as well as their grade and date of birth annotated in the remarks section of the travel authorization;
- 3) a signed copy of the “Defensive Travel Briefing Acknowledgment Statement”; Defensive Travel Briefings are signed annually. *See NTR, Chapter 306-7.2* and
- 4) passport forms, passport photos (which must meet Department of State (DOS) requirements), and passports;
- 5) if applicable, visa photos (which must meet the country’s visa requirements), visa applications, and letters of invitation.

Please note: Your Line or Staff Office may have additional internal requirements.

306-3.3 What happens when an incomplete foreign travel package is submitted?

Your line office contact will be notified via e-mail of the missing documentation/information. **NOTE:** missing documentation/information will cause delays in the processing of your travel package which may result in the trip being delayed or canceled. See <http://www.ofa.noaa.gov/~finance/TRAVEL.htm> for a current foreign travel contact listing.

306-3.4 Is a “Defensive Travel Briefing” required for foreign travel?

Yes. “Defensive Travel Briefings” are required for all employees including invitational travelers on foreign travel. The “Defensive Travel Briefing” consists of an information handout and a “Defensive Travel Briefing Acknowledgment Statement.” The information handout must be read and the statement must be signed, dated, and submitted to the NTO annually. The statement confirms that the traveler has read the information handout. Completed foreign travel packages will not be returned to the traveler until the signed statement is received by the NTO.

See NTR, Chapter 306-7.2 for a “Defensive Travel Briefing.”

306-3.5 What will help ensure my safety as a Government employee traveling on official business?

- 1) Sign the official passport immediately upon receipt.
- 2) Renew passports 6 months before they expire.
- 3) Obtain visas for any in-transit travel.
- 4) Ensure that country clearance cables are processed by your Line Office’s servicing International Activities Office or by your Staff Office.

306-3.6 How can I help ensure foreign travel packages will be processed in time for my travel?

Provide adequate processing-time for foreign travel packages by using the following procedures:

1) Plan ahead - Determine well ahead of travel dates the documentation needed, i.e., an approved foreign travel authorization, an annual briefing, an official passport, and whether or not visas are necessary. Separate documentation is required for each traveler. Always provide the NTO with an office contact name and phone number.

2) Act promptly - Allow the proper processing-time necessary to obtain passports and visas. Passports/visas will not be sent to you until **all** documentation is received.

306-3.7 What are the processing-time requirements for foreign travel packages that do not require visas or passports?

A seven business day processing-time is required for foreign travel packages that do not require any action on our part, i.e., the processing of passports and/or visas. *See NTR, Chapter 306-4, 306-5, and 306-6 for specific processing-time requirements.*

306-3.8 Does NOAA obtain official passports and visas for invitational travelers on foreign travel?

No. NOAA is not responsible for official passports and visas for invitational travelers on foreign travel. Invitational travelers are expected to obtain personal passports and visas. However, NOAA will reimburse passport and visa fees for invitational travelers on foreign travel when approved on the travel authorization.

306-3.9 What do I submit to the NTO for an invitational traveler on foreign travel?

You will submit 2 copies of an approved travel authorization with the following statement annotated in the remarks section of the travel authorization: “The individual named above is traveling at the invitation of the U.S. Government. Although not a formal representative of the U.S. Government, this individual is considered of sufficient character and qualification to participate on this mission.” A “Defensive Travel Briefing Acknowledgment Statement” must also be included.

306-3.10 How does the NTO process a foreign travel package?

Once all of the necessary documents have been processed, the NTO will forward a copy of the approved travel authorization, the official passport containing visas, if applicable, to the travel contact. Upon receipt of the foreign travel package, the travel contact and the traveler should review all documents for completion and accuracy.